



Sustained by Eating, Consumed by Eating Right: Reflections, Rhymes, Rants, and Recipes

Eric L. Ball

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Returning to his hometown after a fifteen-year absence, a northern New Yorker confronts his unlikely Mediterranean past.

When Eric L. Ball returned to his hometown in northern New York after a fifteen-year absence that included time in Greece, he began building his version of the good life, largely revolving around growing, foraging, and cooking safe and wholesome foods. Yet, surrounded by family and old memories, he found himself grappling with the loss of his unlikely Mediterranean past and struggling to navigate the interplay of intellectual convictions and emotional needs as he strived to construct a fulfilling ethical life in the unsustainable modern world. In *Sustained by Eating, Consumed by Eating Right*, Ball shares his experiences and explores questions about food and drink, including the relationship between recipes and learning, the significance of the Mediterranean diet, how to cook authentic Greek foods in the United States, and how to obtain safe and healthy food in a toxic world. Ultimately, Ball considers broader questions about the evolving significance of family, the nature of freedom, the future of the environment, and thinking that one can change the world. The result is a bittersweet story that ponders questions about living a decent and fulfilling life when it comes to food and family.

“[Ball’s] very creative work nicely blends ideas and offers nutritious juices for an empirical, ‘know thyself’ process, showing how nothing about ‘eating right’ should be Greek to us.” — *Journal of Folklore Research*

“Ball’s inquiries ... go beyond food and into issues of family, culture, and place. Throughout, his perspective is heartfelt, honest, and unique, and the lived-experience narrative of the recipes make this book stand out.”
— *ForeWord Reviews*

“Eric Ball’s new book has an ingenious premise and covers important topics ... Ball offers much appetizing writing and explains why eating ‘right,’ with care for yourself and the places that grow the food, is important to body and soul.” — Schenectady *Daily Gazette*

“More than just a reflection on life, the book focuses on a food philosophy that promotes fresh local ingredients, including foraged vegetation.” — Glens Falls *Post-Star*

“A fascinating account of a life devoted to deep appreciation of family, food, and cultural difference. So engaging and well-written you won’t want to put it down.” — Eugene W. Holland, The Ohio State University

“When Hippocrates asked Socrates what nourishes the soul, Socrates replied, ‘Knowledge.’ Plato, Socrates’ student, however, did not think such knowledge could be found in the kitchen. Eric Ball, a true philosopher and an honorary Greek, knows better. This delightful culinary odyssey explores the relationship between eating right and living right. Ball’s mental journey parallels a physical one as he travels from the grey skies of New York’s North County to the blue sea of Crete. Along the way, he forages for dandelion greens, hunts wild mushrooms, tenderizes spring lamb, and improvises *mantinades* over baklava and coffee. Practicing *filoxenia*, the ancient art of hospitality, Ball is the perfect host for thoughtful readers. Buy his book. St.

Euphrosynos, patron and guardian of the Greek kitchen, will bless you.” — Anthony Di Renzo, author of *Bitter Greens: Essays on Food, Politics, and Ethnicity from the Imperial Kitchen*

Eric L. Ball is Associate Professor of Cultural Studies at Empire State College, State University of New York. He lives in the Town of Moreau, New York.

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